



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

March 24, 2011

Ms. Charlotte Towe
Assistant General Counsel
Texas Department of Criminal Justice
P.O. Box 4004
Huntsville, Texas 77342-4004

OR2011-04049

Dear Ms. Towe:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 412564.

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (the "department") received a request for letters written to the Parole Board by two named individuals during the year 2009. You claim that the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.134 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note you have submitted a letter written by the department responding to one of the two named individuals. As such, this document, which we have marked, is not responsive to the request for information. This ruling does not address the public availability of any information that is not responsive to the request, and the department need not release such information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. This section encompasses information protected by other statutes, such as section 508.313 of the Government Code, which provides in part:

(a) All information obtained and maintained, including a victim protest letter or other correspondence, a victim impact statement, a list of inmates eligible for release on parole, and an arrest record of an inmate, is confidential and privileged if the information relates to:

- (1) an inmate of the institutional division [of the department] subject to release on parole, release to mandatory supervision, or executive clemency;
- (2) a releasee; or
- (3) a person directly identified in any proposed plan of release for an inmate.

Gov't Code § 508.313(a). We understand the responsive information constitutes parole records that are maintained by the department's parole division and you state relate to a releasee. *See id.* § 508.001(9) (defining "releasee" as a person released on parole or to mandatory supervision). You do not indicate that the requestor is authorized to obtain the information in question under section 508.313(c).¹ *See id.* § 508.313(c)-(d). We also find the responsive information is not of the kind made public under section 552.029 of the Government Code. *See id.* §§ 508.313(f), 552.029(8). We therefore conclude that the department must withhold the submitted responsive information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 508.313 of the Government Code. As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure of the responsive information.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public

¹Section 508.313(c) provides for the release of information encompassed by section 508.313(a) to the governor, a member of the board of pardons and paroles or a parole commissioner, the criminal justice policy council, or an eligible entity requesting information for a law enforcement, prosecutorial, correctional, clemency, or treatment purpose. Section 508.313(d) provides that "eligible entity" means a government agency, an organization with which the Department of Criminal Justice contracts or an organization to which the department provides a grant, or an organization to which inmates are referred for services by the department.

information under the Act must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lindsay E. Hale".

Lindsay E. Hale
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

LEH/em

Ref: ID# 412564

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)